

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING**

**PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES SURVEY, 1999**

**Summary of Results**

In June 1999, the California Department of Education (CDE) and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) developed a Pupil Personnel Services Survey. The CTC sent this survey to every school district in California that employed at least one Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) specialist for the 1998-99 school year.

The survey consisted of questions related to providing counseling programs, number of counselors at each school level, district enrollment at each school level, percentage of counselors' time spent in various functions, counseling provided by contracts with private agencies, comprehensive guidance programs, guidance curriculum, peer resource programs, PPS specialists employed, anticipated future needs, and funding sources. Optional comments were also invited.

According to CBEDS data for 1998-99, there were 1055 school districts in California. These included 572 elementary districts, 323 unified districts, 93 high school districts, 58 county offices of education, and 9 CYA districts. Of these 1055 districts, only 764 provide any PPS specialists. This survey was sent to 1,046 school districts. Of those 1,046 districts, 449 districts (43%) responded to the survey. The following is a summary of the major results of that survey.

**Districts Providing a Counseling Program**

Of 444 districts responding, 79 percent provide a counseling program; 21 percent do not. In those districts that do provide a counseling program, the following percentage of districts reported that they include these counseling areas:

- Academic counseling: 63%
- Career and vocational counseling: 50%
- Personal and social counseling: 73%
- Other areas: 15%

"Other areas" reported included many functions that could be considered as academic, career, vocational, personal, or social counseling. For example, the major specific "other" areas identified by 66 districts were, in rank order: crisis counseling, conflict resolution, drug and alcohol prevention, testing, school psychology, special education counseling, attendance counseling, college advisement, attendance recording, administrative duties, and career planning.

### Number of Counselors at Each School Level

Approximate number of counselors (Full-Time Equivalents) assigned at each level (448 districts reporting):

Level:	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle/Junior High</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>All Levels</u>
Number:	402	962	1820	3184
Percent:	13%	30%	57%	100%

### Current District Enrollment at Each School Level

District enrollment at each school level (same 448 districts):

Level:	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle/Junior High</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>All Levels</u>
Enrollment:	1,552,524	753,246	988,260	3,294,030
Percent:	47%	23%	30%	100%

Approximate student-counselor ratios at each school level:

Level:	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle/Junior High</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>All Levels</u>
Ratio:	3862-to-1	783-to-1	543-to-1	1035-to-1

### Percentage of Counselors' Time Spent in Various Functions

Approximate percentage of time spent in major counseling functions, by school level (322 districts reporting):

Level:		<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle/Junior High</u>	<u>High School</u>
Academic --	Range:	0 – 100%	0 – 95%	0 – 100%
	Mean:	22%	37%	53%
	Median:	20%	30%	50%
Career --	Range:	0 – 20%	0 – 50%	0 – 100%
	Mean:	9%	13%	22%
	Median:	10%	10%	20%
Personal --	Range:	0 – 100%	0 – 100%	0 – 90%
	Mean:	73%	51%	21%
	Median:	80%	50%	20%
Other --	Range:	5 – 80%	5 – 100%	5 – 55%
	Mean:	26%	22%	20%
	Median:	20%	20%	20%

### Educational Counseling Provided by Contract with Private Agency

Of 406 districts responding, 27 percent contracted with a private commercial agency or individual for part of their educational counseling program; 73 percent did not. Of those districts that *do* contract for outside services, approximate 23 percent of their program is contracted out.

## Comprehensive Developmental Guidance Programs

A “comprehensive” program is defined as one that identifies student outcomes and that is evaluated on the basis of the achievement of those outcomes for all students, as described in Education Code Section 49600. Of 398 districts responding, 26 percent reported that they provide a comprehensive developmental guidance program for all students; 74 percent said they do not.

### A Guidance Curriculum

A guidance curriculum includes regular sequenced instruction in academic, career, personal, and social growth and development, often infused throughout the total school curriculum, planned and taught by various qualified individuals. Of 348 districts responding, 37 percent reported that their program includes a guidance curriculum; 63 percent said it does not.

Of those districts that do provide a guidance curriculum, the following methods or strategies are used most frequently used to teach the curriculum (percent of districts using each method):

<u>Method</u>	<u>% Using</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>% Using</u>
Peer programs	70%	Student seminars	38%
Class meetings	69%	Class projects	37%
Group guidance programs	61%	Mini-courses	25%
Purchased curriculums	47%	Others	19%

### Peer Resource Programs

Of the 365 districts responding, 75 percent indicated that they regularly provide peer counseling, conflict resolution, or other peer resource programs.

### Pupil Personnel Services Specialists Currently Employed

The 416 districts responding to this question reported that they employ a total of 4,687 PPS specialists. These include the following full-time equivalents (FTEs), by number and percent of total personnel:

School counselors:	2,630 (56%)	Licensed professionals	
School psychologists:	1,092 (23%)	(MFCC, LCSW, LEP, etc.)	67 (1.4%)
PPS paraprofessionals	483 (10%)	School social workers	55 (1.2%)
CWA supervisors:	360 (8%)		

### Anticipated Future Need for PPS Professionals

Districts reported their anticipated need in the future for selected PPS professionals, level of need and percentage of districts indicating each level were as follows:

<u>Specialist</u>	<u>Need More</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Need Less</u>	<u>Number of Districts</u>
Counselors	66%	33%	1%	335
Psychologists	64%	35%	1%	302
Social Workers	56%	43%	1%	148
Child Welfare & Attendance	47%	52%	1%	170
Licensed Professionals	39%	60%	1%	124
PPS Paraprofessionals	50%	49%	1%	167

## **Funding Sources Used to Provide PPS Specialists**

The 416 districts responding reported the following funding sources used to provide counselors, psychologists, or social workers, listed in rank order:

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Percent of Districts Using This Funding</u>
1.	General fund	82%
2.	Special education (IDEA)	55%
3.	Safe and Drug Free Schools (Title IV)	43%
4.	Tenth Grade Counseling (Ed. Code 48431.6)	34%
5.	IASA (Title 1)	21%
6.	Other (Grants, foundations, etc.)	19%
7.	Healthy Start – Support for Services	13%
8.	School-to-Career	12%
9.	Carl D. Perkins Voc.-Tech. Ed. Act	12%
10.	IASA (Title XI – Coordinated Services)	5%

## **Comments (Optional)**

More than 95 districts offered comments. These districts included elementary, high school, and unified districts, and county offices of education. Most comments were related to the need for more counseling services, lack of funding, use of county services, contracting for services, no use of counselors at all, and use of interns, administrators, and administrators instead of counselors.

Typical illustrative remarks include the following:

- More counselors are needed at the elementary level who are well-trained in personal and social counseling. At this early age we can help students resolve problems so that they don't become major issues at a later date and more resistant to change.
- We are in woeful shape statewide. More funding from state to provide counseling services needs to be a priority. Counseling is among programs cut when money is tight.
- We have an incredibly difficult task in this area. Growing responsibilities (accountability testing, scholarships, scheduling, etc.) and an increasing student population results in a student-counselor ratio of about 500-to-1 in our district.
- Categorical funding is too low to make an impact in this area.
- Counseling falls to the principals and the ROP technicians.
- Counseling is provided by our county mental health department for students with long term needs.
- Even if we double our support service personnel, it would not be enough; we would still just be putting out fires. We need enough personnel to focus on prevention.

- The Legislature needs to mandate elementary counselors and fund them. My district has funded my position for the last 16 years. For a while I was the only full-time middle school counselor in the county.
- Our district has a low-income population. Our students benefit greatly from all the counseling we can provide to them.
- Money is needed for K-8 counseling!!!!
- Developmental counseling is crucial and resources to provide it are inadequate.
- Our services are provided via contract with a local non-profit agency.
- OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID.
- Due to the increased ratio of students to counselors, counselors feel that they are spending too much time on administrative tasks and not enough time on personal and social and career and vocational counseling.
- The lack of the State's priority for student mental health needs – as demonstrated by the lack of adequate funds to implement counseling services – is a disgrace. Hopefully, counseling will soon be seen as more valuable, rather than a frill.
- Few elementary schools have full-time counselors, and most sites feel these services are becoming increasingly more important.
- Small rural districts under 1000 ADA do not receive sufficient federal funds to assist in hiring counselors.
- Elementary schools have part-time interns who run Friendship Groups, provided by SIP funds.
- The State should fund counseling for the schools.
- This [program] would be great to be able to afford, but without special funding we will not fill any counseling positions.
- We need elementary counselors and more psychologists, but don't have the money to do it.
- A student-counselor ratio of 550-to-1 makes it difficult. I've been told that the statewide ratio is higher than ours. Can this be true?

For additional information regarding this survey, please contact:

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